

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 6085

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EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: US, CI, SREF, SHUM

SUBJECT: IMPLICATIONS OF CHILEAN PRISONER RELEASE INITIATIVE

REF: (A) STATE 213634; (B) SANTIAGO 5918; (C) SANTIAGO 5748

1. SUMMARY: WE INDICATE FACTORS WHICH WILL DETERMINE DEGREE OF NEGATIVE CHILEAN REACTION TO ADMISSION INTO US OF CHILEAN DETAINEES OR REFUGEES, THROUGH PAROLE PROCEDURE. END SUMMARY.

2. GOC AND ITS SUPPORTERS WILL NOT BE PLEASED BY ANY INDICATION THAT USG WILL RELAX PRESENT RESTRICTIONS REGARDING USE OF PAROLE PROCEDURE FOR CHILEAN DETAINEES OR REFUGEES. DEGREE OF THEIR DISPLEASURE WILL DEPEND ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS LISTED BELOW, BUT ANY CHANGE WILL REPRESENT SOMETHING OF A FALL FROM GRACE. IN EARLY MONTHS AFTER SEPT 1973 COUP, US CONSPICUOUSLY DID NOT RECEIVE ANY ASYLEES IN ITS EMBASSY OR OPEN ITS DOORS TO CHILEANS FEARING POLITICAL PERSECUTION. A SHIFT IN POSITION WILL INEVITABLY ALIGN US TO SOME DEGREE WITH LATIN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS WHICH, THROUGH RECEPTION OF ASYLEES AND REFUGEES, HAVE IN EFFECT SIGNIFIED THEIR DISAPPROVAL OF GOC'S REPRESSIVE HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.

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3. HOW BADLY THE CHILEANS FEEL ABOUT IT WILL DEPEND ON

THE FOLLOWING.

4. FIRST, CHILEAN SENSITIVITY TO ALLEGED REBUFFS OR SLIGHTS BY USG AND CONGRESS RISES AND FALLS IN PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES. ON RECEIPT STATE REFTTEL, WE SUGGESTED A BRIEF DELAY BECAUSE CIA "REVELATIONS" WERE AT THEIR HEIGHT; KENNEDY AMENDMENT TO FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT (CONTINUING RESOLUTION) IN SENATE CUTTING OFF MILITARY ASSISTANCE HAD SOURCED THE MILITARY; AND LEGAL COMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM MISTAKEN EXPULSION TO US OF DRUG RUNNER CARLOS CHOY-ZEBALLOS HAD ANTAGONIZED OTHERS. THE COINCIDENCE OF THESE EVENTS IS NOT LIKELY TO BE REPEATED, AND WE WOULD HOPE A US DECISION IN A CALMER ATMOSPHERE COULD PASS WITH LESS ATTENTION IN SANTIAGO.

5. SECOND, MUCH WOULD DEPEND ON NUMBERS US WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT, AND MODALITIES FOR SELECTING THEM. SEPTELS INDICATE NUMBERS CURRENTLY BECOMING AVAILABLE THROUGH RELEASE FROM DETENTION IN CHILE WILL BE SMALL -- IN THE HUNDREDS RATHER THAN IN THE THOUSANDS (THOUGH THERE ARE OF COURSE ALREADY THOUSANDS OF CHILEAN REFUGEES IN ARGENTINA AND PERU). CHILEAN REACTION WILL CLEARLY BE LESS NEGATIVE TO EXTENT CHILEANS ARE LED TO FEEL PAROLE PROCEDURE WILL BE IMPLEMENTED ONLY ON A HIGHLY SELECTIVE BASIS, WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO AVOIDING ADMISSION OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS INELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY UNDER SECTIONS 212(A)(27, 28 OR 29) OF INA. RELATED PROBLEM, THOUGH PERHAPS OF LESS INTEREST TO CHILEANS, WILL BE TO AVOID USE OF PAROLE PROCEDURE BY "ECONOMIC REFUGEES."

6. A THIRD FACTOR IS EXTENT OF CONTROL CHILEANS BELIEVE WILL BE EXERCISED OVER ACTIVITIES OF PAROLEES ONCE THEY ARRIVE IN US. WE DOUBT GOVERNMENT WOULD OBJECT TO LIMITED NUMBER OF PAROLEES WHO SETTLE DOWN QUIETLY TO MAKE A LIVING. BUT IT WOULD BE UNHAPPY IF IT FELT WE WERE ADMITTING PEOPLE WHO WOULD ENGAGE IN PROPAGANDA AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES SIMILAR TO THOSE INDULGED IN BY MANY CHILEAN REFUGEES NOW IN WESTERN EUROPE. WE ARE NOT CLEAR AS TO WHAT CONTROLS COULD BE EXERCISED OVER, SAY, CHILEANS WHO FIND EMPLOYMENT IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES AND THEN PARTICIPATE IN ANTI-CHILEAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY; BUT TO EXTENT WE COULD RESTRICT THIS, AND SO INFORM GOC, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL HERE.

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UM FURTHER TO LOCAL IMPACT OF A CHANGE IN US PRACTICE, DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE THAT EMBASSY CONSULAR WORKLOAD HAS RECENTLY INCREASED TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT OFFICERS FROM OTHER SECTIONS HAVE BEEN DETAILED TO HELP HANDLE NORMAL VISA APPLICATIONS. A PAROLE PROGRAM WOULD REQUIRE TDY OFFICER FOR ITS OPERATION.

8. ON GROUNDS OF CONSISTENCY, IT CAN BE ARGUED THAT IF US, FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS, RECEIVES REFUGEES AND DEFECTEES FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, IT SHOULD CERTAINLY BE WILLING TO DO SAME FROM CHILE. (EVEN THOUGH CHILE IS BY NO MEANS A TOTALITARIAN SOCIETY, PRES. PINOCHET LEFT GOC OPEN TO THIS CONCLUSION BY CHALLENGING USSR AND CUBA, IN HIS SEPT 11 SPEECH, TO RELEASE THEIR POLITICAL PRISONERS ON A ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS WITH RELEASES OF CHILEAN PRISONERS.) IF THIS PREMISE IS ACCEPTED, RECEPTION OF CHILEAN REFUGEES CAN BE JUSTIFIED ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, AND AS RESPONSIVE TO CONCERNS OF US CITIZENS AND GROUPS MENTIONED STATE REFTEL.

9. NEGATIVE EFFECT ON CHILEANS WOULD CERTAINLY BE MINIMIZED IF AT SAME TIME WE COULD SHOW ADDITIONAL RESPONSIVENESS TO GROWING CHILEAN CONCERNS REGARDING MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, THROUGH SOME INDICATION OF ACTION ON LONG-PENDING MILITARY SUPPLY REQUESTS, OR FAVORABLE DECISIONS ON AID LOAN PIPELINE AND ADDITIONAL PL-480, TITLE I AVAILABILITIES.
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